

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, January 6. 1708.

WHat abundant Cause have we to say, Moderation is a Vertue, in every Case that comes before us? And whether do Extremes lead us, *Higb-Flying*, which we have made such a Noise about, what is it but running into Excesses and Extremes in Government, Civil and Ecclesiastical, and Extremes in Notion, is *Higb-Flying* in its Kind every Way?

It is my Work, and ever shall I hope, to steer the middle Way to bring every Thing to its true Ballance, and find out the Golden Mean of every Action, in which alone is Wisdom, Safety and Peace.

I know I steer a doubtful Course, and cannot expect to please either one side or the other; nor indeed comparing it to the true End which I pursue, do I seek it or am I concern'd, who I either please or displease.

Yet I cannot say, but I am concern'd to be be rightly understood; *first*, because those that will not, are always apt to pretend, they cannot understand me; and *secondly*, those are pinch'd with the Argument, are always misconstruing the Author; for this Reason, and that what I say may be the more extensive, I shall endeavour to explain myself, so that nothing but willfull Prejudice can mis-represent me.

It has been advanc'd by the Author of the *Observer*, that the best Way of carrying on the War against France, is to prosecute it chiefly by Sea; this, it is said, was given by two great Men, as their Advice to his late Majesty King *William*, and some Reflections have been made on the King's Memory, for not taking that Advice; with what Justice I refer to my last—And other Re-

Reflections are made in the same Paper on the Imperfections of the greatest Successes by Land, in order to illustrate this; and I am now to examine this Part, and to oppose plainly and directly, and consequently fairly; I take the Terms of the Question from my Antagonist, and

1. I do affirm, that prosecuting the War against *France* chiefly by Sea, is not the best Way of prosecuting the War.

2. It is not the only Way to humble the *French* King, to ruin his Naval Power.

3. I'll prove the other Part of it, that the only Way to humble him, is to break in upon him by Land, wrest from him his Conquests, break into his Country, and destroy his Armies.

I have nothing to fence against here, but that unreasonable and censorious Spirit that shall suggest, I am undervaluing our Naval Power; I expect now to be treated as a fair Disputant with Argument, not Calumny; I give no ill Language, and persuade myself, the Opposer is a Person of such Candour, I shall receive none—But the Age is willful and furious, and therefore I am obliged to explain as I go—I am not at all lessening the Value of our Naval War, but stating the true *Medium*, and letting every Thing have its true Weight. These Things we ought to have done, and not to leave the other Things undone.

To prosecute the War against *France* chiefly by Sea, as the Subject in this Case, is to be consider'd, 1. Wherein did the Power of *France* chiefly consist, all the World will allow me, it did not chiefly consist in his Naval Power—And this has been too evident in the Prosecution of the several Parts of the War, wherein *France* has told us, that he could lay up his Fleet in his Harbours, and yet be as dangerous an Enemy to us as before—When the Loss of so great a Part of his Navy fell upon him, as at *La Hogue*, what a Demonstration did he give of this? From that Day to this, you have had an acknowledg'd Superiority at Sea, and has the *French* been the less formidable to us? No, he has had this Advantage of us? that he has very rarely fitted out his whole Fleet since, by which he has sav'd an Expence of 30 Millions of *Livres* every

Year, and yet we have been obliged every Summer to fit out the same Force—I know, it has been the Opinion of some, as great Men as Major *Wildman*, or D. of *Schombergh*, that we might rather retrench half our Naval Expence; and that to keep 50 Capital Ships always together, would be as effectual to our Safety, as the great Fleets we have always had out, and leave us more able both to guard and carry on our Commerce.

1. This, they say, would prompt the *French* to come out in Navies, and they always did us least Harm, when their Fleet was out, because then their Privateers were call'd in, and we could soon add to our 50 Sail, from flying Squadrons, as we saw Occasions.

2. This Method would save us near a Million yearly in Expence.

3. It would put the *French* upon spending at least a Million *Sterling per Annum*, more than they now do; and to put them to Expence, is the Way to reduce them.

4. It might save us half a Million yearly in the Losses of Trade, by lessening the Number of Privateers, which when their Fleet is fitted out, are restrain'd for Want of Men.

5. It may be the best Way to reduce their Naval Power, since then we may perhaps come sometime or other to Hands with them; whereas, if they lay up their Fleet, all the Fleets you can fit out, cannot come at them to hurt them.

I do not say, this is my Opinion, but I say, it has been the Opinion of some Men, whose Judgment is unquestion'd, and their sincere Well-wishes to our Safety too; my Argument is plain, the best Way to prosecute a War against any Prince, is to fall upon him in that Part, in which his Power does chiefly consist. Now 'tis apparent, the great Power of *France*, and in which he had gain'd the Title of Invincible, consisted in his Land-Forces—Which, at the Beginning of the late War, in Goodness of Troops, Officers, Discipline, Management, and the Experience of their Generals, exceeded not only any in *Europe*, but perhaps all *Europe* put together—And let those that undervalue the Conduct of the late King, and tell

us of the little Progress of that War, examine the Difference between the Forces of the French, at that Time and now, and how he had their unbroken, disciplin'd, veterane Legions to contend with, Armies that were not to be box'd out of their Trenches, *a-la-mode de Turin*, with less than half their Number; *But that by the Way.*

These were the Things, the Power of France consisted in; his Naval Strength was an Accident to his Power, the main Part in which he was terrible to us all, was his Army, and it could not be, that the best way to humble him was to fall on him chiefly by Sea, since by that you could not have hurt him in the most essential Part of his Strength.

2. The second Argument is, *That the only Way to humble France is to ruin his Naval Power.* I shall first prove, this cannot be true; *secondly*, that if it were, this is not to be done by carrying on the War chiefly by Sea.

1. Ruining the Naval Power of France cannot be the only Way to humble him, because were it carry'd on with the utmost Success, it could not reduce him; whereas a vigorous Prosecution of the War by Land might ruin him, and within a little had entirely subdued him—And here may be effectually answer'd that Suggestion in the *Observer*, which is spoken, 1. To undervalue the Labours of King William; and 2. To bring the Nation into a Dislike of the Land Service, as useless and ineffectual.

1. *We all know, how little Great Britain gain'd by the Land-War in his (K. William) Reign.*

2. *We may see plainly, our matchless Land-Victories at Hockstet and Ramellies, have been far from ruining France.*

I would never have touch'd upon the Ignorance of these Suggestions, if it had not been for the ill Use may be made of them by some, in these our divided Times; I hope, the Author had no such Design, but I can tell him, this Cry of wooden Walls, and encreasing our Naval Strength, has been always prompted by those that have least Mind France should be beaten at all—Were we upon a defensive War, and were France threatening to attack us at home, then wooden Walls for my Money, and one Fleet were worth two Armies; but while, GOD be praised, we can keep the War abroad, and that the Protestant Religion and Liberties of Europe are to be defended in defending the Interest of our Allies, in protecting their Liberties as Barriers to our own——While this is our Happiness, our Business is to carry the War on heartily and principally by Land; at the same Time, *pray, mistake me not, Gentlemen*, at the same Time I say, not slackening all possible Endeavours at Sea; in which give me Leave to say, it has not been our Want of Power, but our ill disposing that Power, which has been our Discouragement; of which hereafter.

MISCELLANEA.

THOUGH my Defence of the late King's Memory has made me digress from the Subject of this Part, which I was upon, yet I think it of such Moment, that I cannot omit the Prosecution of it; I have been upon proving the Consequence, which our Colonies in America are to us, and how concern'd we ought to be to protect, encourage, encrease and strengthen them.

In pursuing this, I have encountered that Giant of an Objection, That to strengthen

the Hands of our Brethren in America, is to make them set up for an Independance on us, and either make them our Enemies, or put them into the Hands of our Enemies: I will not say, I have satisfy'd you in this Point, Gentlemen, you that read are Judges, not I; but I have given my Opinion, and I hope, have proved it, that just the contrary is true; and that to make our Colonies rich, great, populous and strong, is the only Way to secure them to you for ever,